

Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District

Annual Report

July 1, 2006—June 30, 2007

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Cooperator of the Year 2006 *Dennis Nix Family*

Mr. Dennis Nix and family of Furman has been named the 2006 Cooperator of the Year for the Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District. The Nix Family has an EQIP-Small Farmer Initiative contract on their farm that includes installing pipe-



Pictured above are Dennis and Tracy Nix, along with sons Joshua, Miles and Nathan.

line, fencing, watering tanks, micro-irrigation, pasture and hayland planting and nutrient and pest management. Currently 1,400 feet of pipeline and a well has been installed with the EQIP-SFI contract. However, this work has not been completed solely by one person. Dennis and his wife, Tracy, along with three sons are all very involved with the practices being installed and the daily operation of the farm. Dennis and Tracy are using the conservation practices to teach their sons about conservation on the farm. The Nix's also manage cows, chickens, donkeys, goats and 50 acres of cropland.

The Cooperator of the Year award is given annually to a farmer or landowner for installing conservation practices that improve and sustain our natural resources. The Conservation District appreciates the Nix Family for installing these practices and diligently working to enhance the natural resources on their farm.

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Beach Sweep/River Sweep is South Carolina's largest one-day volunteer cleanup event. The cleanup, organized by the SC Sea Grant Consortium and SC DNR, has taken place since 1988. Last year there was over 2,000 volunteers involved with inland cleanups and a little over 43,000 lbs. of trash was removed from South Carolina's waterways.

The official cleanup date this year is Saturday, September 15. The Hampton Conservation District locally sponsors this program and coordinates the cleanup and removal of debris from boat landings and adjoining roadways. Anyone can take part in the cleanup - businesses, civic clubs, recreation clubs, individuals, families, school groups and church groups.

If you are interested in participating or want more information on the program, please contact the district office at 943-2586 ext. 3.

Technical Staff

Technical assistance is provided to the Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the SC Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Technical staff are Diane Leone, NRCS District Conservationist; Mike Lott, NRCS Resource Conservationist; Charles Murdaugh, NRCS Conservation Technician; Odessa Sirman, NRCS Soil Conservationist; Paula Rhodes, District Administrative Assistant and Education Coordinator; and Jennifer Majors, SC DNR Program Coordinator.

All programs and services of the Conservation District, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, and DNR-Land, Water and Conservation Division are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

Meetings of the Board of Commissioners are regularly scheduled on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at The Hampton Restaurant located in Hampton. All meetings are open to the public.

2006-2007 Affiliate Members

The Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District is pleased to announce all those who participated in this past year's Affiliate Membership Program. All contributions received through the Affiliate Membership Program are used to support the educational programs offered through the Conservation District. We have numerous educational programs already in place and have the potential to increase programming offered to assist students and all citizens in Hampton County.

The citizens of Hampton County are fortunate to have an abundance of natural resources ~ soil, water, air, plants and animals. These resources will not last forever unless they are used wisely. The Commissioners of the Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District are committed to educating children, citizens and community leaders about conservation and environmental issues.

Our conservation friends are important to us, and your donation will help continue the work that we do. Thanks to all the businesses and individuals who helped to make this past year's Affiliate Membership Program a huge success!

☐ Supporting Member \$25

☐ Sustaining Member \$50

☐ Steward of the Soil \$100+

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Steward of the Soil—\$100+

Anderson & Brown, LLC
 Drawdy, Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Sr.
 Gibson Landclearing
 Hampton County Farm Bureau
 J.R. Wilson Construction Co., Inc.
 Mills, Dr. Francis A.
 Mole Farm
 Nimmer Turf & Tree Farm, Inc.
 Palmetto Electric Cooperative, Inc.
 Palmetto State Bank
 Youmans, Lynn & Bob

Sustaining—\$50

AgSouth Farm Credit
 American Forest Management, Inc.
 BB&T
 Goettee Farm
 Guess Farm Equipment Co., Inc.
 Hampton Animal Hospital
 Hanna & Hanna, Inc.
 Henderson, Daniel E.
 Hydro Enterprises, Inc.
 Mexico Bay Farm
 Polk's Muffler & Brake
 Regions Bank
 Shaffer-Mixon Real Estate and Auction Co.

Affiliate—\$25

Benton and Rhodes, Inc.
 Bo Peep Plantation
 Boyles, Charles M. Sr.
 Breland Well Drilling
 Bug Busters, Inc.
 Bullard Farms
 Burris, Skeet & Gail
 Chitwood, Charles
 Clariant Corporation
 Cram, Peter
 Cummings Oil Co., Inc.
 Cusabo Plantation
 Laffitte, Mary & Norris
 Maner, Lawton
 Morrison Forestry & Real Estate Co., Inc.
 Pendarvis, Butch
 Rhodes, John Tillman
 Scott Woodlands, LLC
 TGS Land Surveying
 Wise Batten, Inc.

Wild & Well Day



Lowcountry Institute Education Intern, Sarah Ernst, entertained students with various live reptiles and discussed their habitats.

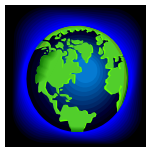


Cory Drennan, DNR/NRCS Wildlife Biologist, gave an exciting lesson on aquatics and the effects of pollution/litter on animals that live in the water.

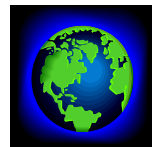
"The 12th Annual Wild & Well Day was another exceptional educational day for all who participated," stated Paula Rhodes, Education Coordinator with the Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District. Over 175 students, teachers, chaperones and program presenters participated. This fun day was held on May 18, 2007 at Lake Warren State Park. Students rotated among learning stations targeting reptiles, water conservation, dairy, furs, point/non-point source pollution, drug awareness and aquatic resources. This action packed day was designed to bring about awareness and knowledge of the environment and wildlife and also encourages health life-style choices.

This program was presented through a partnership with the following agencies:

- ◇ Beaufort Soil & Water Conservation District
- ◇ Clemson Extension Service 4-H
- ◇ Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District
- ◇ Hampton County Recreation Department
- ◇ Lake Warren State Park
- ◇ New Life Center
- ◇ Orangeburg Soil & Water Conservation District
- ◇ SC Department of Natural Resources
- ◇ The Lowcountry Institute at Spring Island
- ◇ USDA-NRCS



Fennell Elementary Students Celebrate Earth Day



Fennell Elementary Kindergarden-3rd grade students were entertained with a special Earth Day puppet show "Litter Trashes Everyone" hosted by the Hampton Conservation District on April 24, 2006. The puppet show, created and sponsored by PalmettoPride, teaches children ways to take pride, take responsibility and take action against litter in their community. The informative play features the Columbia Marionette Theatre's marionettes and hand puppets that educate children on ways to help make South Carolina a cleaner, more beautiful place to live.

During the show, the puppets encourage all of their friends and the audience to put litter in the proper place and tells how food wrappings can pose a threat to wildlife, along with making your community unattractive. The students were also entertained by numerous marionettes of children and animals along with upbeat music and songs.



We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. ~Native American Proverb

4-H₂O Camp

The Hampton Conservation District partnered with Clemson Extension 4-H to sponsor a camp for local 8-12 year old children that focused on water related issues. The camp was held May 29-31, 2007 at Lake Warren State Park. The twenty-two children and nine volunteers who participated throughout the three day camp learned about various aspects of water including watersheds, water quality, water clarity and aquatic organisms. The campers enjoyed many hands-on activities, experiments and other fun projects, all that addressed SC Science Curriculum Standards. Lake Warren State Park staff lead a discussion and walk on their .3 mile Yemassee Nature trail and discussed litter and the effects of litter on aquatic animals and the environment. As a service to Lake Warren, campers conducted a litter pickup beside the roadway and the spill-

way. Other partners in this camp were: SC DNR, Orangeburg Clemson Extension 4-H, Lake Warren State Park, Hampton County Recreation Department, and USDA-NRCS.



Campers conducted several experiments with water taken out of Lake Warren. In this picture they are checking the pH level.



One day of camp was focused on completing a stream water quality assessment. Campers were involved in obtaining water samples and identifying aquatic insects and other small organisms.



2007 4-H₂O participants



A fun time was had by all who tried backyard bass fishing!



The Hampton Conservation District is seeking 9th and 10th grade students who are interested in natural resources to attend the Carolina Coastal Adventure for the weekend of October 12-14, 2007. Participants will gather at Santee Cooper's Somerset Facility in Moncks Corner to learn about water quality, water quantity, wildlife, soils, hydrology, fisheries and ecosystems. They will visit the Cooper River, canoe in a swamp, ride on an ocean research vessel, trawl the harbor, hear stories around a bonfire and many other fun and exciting activities. Not to mention create many lasting memories and make new friends from all across the state.

If you know of a 9th or 10th grader who may be interested, contact the Hampton Conservation District for an application or for further information. Students are sponsored by their local conservation district. **Applications must be in to the district office by September 10.**

Carolina Coastal Adventure is a South Carolina Conservation Districts Foundation program in partnership with Santee Cooper, Old Santee Canal Park, Living Tees, Charleston Soil & Water Conservation District, Berkeley Electric Cooperative, Berkeley Soil & Water Conservation District, Berkeley Water & Sanitation, Nucor, Home Telephone Company, Inc. SC Association of Conservation Districts, SC Department of Natural Resources, Sanders Brothers.

Conservation Efforts In Hampton County

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial assistance to landowners in Hampton County. NRCS provides conservation assistance through the Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD). NRCS in Hampton County develops conservation plans and engineering designs on a variety of conservation practices that protect the natural resources in the county.

This past year, the Hampton SWCD and NRCS certified and approved 67 conservation practices worth \$131,000. These practices were installed on private land within Hampton County on a voluntary basis with assistance from the Conservation District and NRCS. The following conservation practices were installed to keep the county's water clean, preserve and sustain healthy soil and restore wildlife habitat:

- **1,105 acres of Prescribed Burning** was completed for wildlife habitat enhancement and to improve the quality of habitat.
- **2,214 acres of Cover Crop** was planted to control erosion and to improve soil and water quality.
- **1,000 acres of Residue Management** was applied to control erosion and improve soil health and soil quality.
- As part of a rotational grazing system **3 wells** for livestock watering were installed and **14 acres of pasture and hayland planting** was completed, along with the installation of **4,650 feet of fencing**.
- **68 acres of irrigation conversion** from sprinkler to drop nozzles was applied for water conservation.



Prescribed burning is used as a habitat management tool to improve wildlife by controlling undesirable vegetation and reducing wildfire hazards. Prescribed burning also improves natural food and cover for deer, doves, quail, turkeys and various songbirds.



Rotational disking involves annually disking one-third of a wildlife area on a rotational basis each year. This allows different growth stages of vegetation, therefore providing wildlife habitat diversity.



Field Borders are established along the edges of crop fields to provide natural wildlife food cover. Additional benefits are erosion control and improved water quality.

Helping People Help the Land



Hampton Soil & Water Conservation District

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USDA Cost-Share Programs



The Hampton Conservation District, assisted by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, provides technical assistance to local governments, land users, and groups to protect the environment. Together, NRCS and the Conservation District provides assistance to land users with erosion problems, drainage, wildlife management and other resource concerns. The following is an overview of cost-share programs managed by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Applications are being accepted on a continuous basis.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP): The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides landowners with the opportunity to retire cropland in environmentally sensitive areas. The continuous sign-up allows for the establishment of wildlife areas, trees, filter strips, and riparian buffers. The CP-33, Quail Habitat Buffers, has provided landowners within the county incentives to establish native cover around the edge of croplands.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP): The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides incentive payments up to 50% cost sharing for conservation practices such as micro-irrigation, erosion control structures, field borders, pasture and hayland planting, livestock management, and animal waste facilities. EQIP also provides for a Small Farmers Initiative. Cost sharing items included are micro-irrigation, no-till, prescribed grazing, fencing, heavy use area establishment, livestock watering system and record keeping.

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP): The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program to restore wetlands that have been altered or drained. Landowners participating in WRP can establish conservation easements of either permanent or 30 year duration, or they can enter into restoration cost-share agreements where no easement is involved. In exchange for establishing a permanent conservation easement through WRP, the landowner receives payment up to the agricultural value of the land as well as cost-sharing for work needed to restore the wetland. The 30-year easement payment is 75% of what would be provided for a permanent easement on the same site and 75% of the restoration cost. In all instances, landowners continue to control access to their land.

WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM (WHIP): The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) provides cost-sharing and incentive payments to develop habitat for wildlife on private lands. Cost share is available for such practices as prescribed burning, native cover management, tree planting, timber stand improvement and natural regeneration.